

FOR MEMBERS OF
THE LAHORE
AHMADIYYA
JAMA'AT ONLY



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Hazrat Ameer's Message

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

It is a great pleasure to write this message for I'LAN, as it gives me the chance to reflect on last month's issue, the theme of which covered a subject so close to my heart; that is knowledge.

Throughout my life, I have given high priority to not only seeking, but also disseminating knowledge amongst my students. The Qur'anic verse "and say: My Lord, increase me in knowledge" (20:114) has been a motto and driving force in my life. There is no limit to knowledge, which according to the sayings of the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, one has to seek from "the cradle to the grave."

In this materialistic world, great effort is made to acquire knowledge beneficial to worldly gains. But negligible time is spent in seeking

knowledge useful for the advancement of the soul and for gaining nearness to Allah.

Through this message, I draw your attention to the need to increase knowledge that will lead to one's spiritual advancement. It is time for all of us to reflect on how much time in a day we spend studying the Qur'an, Hadith and other books pertaining to religious subjects; how much time do we spend acquiring knowledge from the resources available to our Jama'at, including our website, www.aaail.org?

Let us resolve today to spare 10 minutes a day reading and studying the meaning and interpretation of the Holy Qur'an; another 10 consulting material on our website, and in doing so, we will be laying a foundation for making our lives more meaningful.

Professor Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed
Ameer and President of the
Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya
Movement

Our Motto

"In-Allah-ha-Ma'anaa"
(Surely Allah is with us—The Holy Qur'an, 9:40)

Editor's Message

Dear Readers, Assalaam-o-Alaikum,

The March issue of I'LAN has been given the theme of "Prayers" and as such, we have gathered some useful reading for you on this topic. We hope you will find these beneficial and encourage you to send us your suggestions of topics you would like to see in future editions.

On page 8 is a short piece on "The Five Daily Prayers" that has been taken from the renowned "Muslim Prayer Book" by Maulana Muhammad Ali.

On page 9 you will find a short book review of "Does God Hear Man's Prayers?" by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed.

On page 10 is an extract of a UK newspaper article published this month, which looks at the relationship between prayer and anger management.

On page 11, we have included some advice

from Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed on "Concentration in Prayer," as well as selected Hadith on prayers.

Finally, this month's "Ask the Expert" question on page 12 considers the importance of prayers in light of the Muslim belief in pre-ordination.

In addition to these articles, you will also find photographs from the Centre of recent activities, which includes photos from a Shaban-ul-Ahmadiyya symposium on this month's theme: "The Importance of Prayer" (on page 3).

Throughout I'LAN, you will see news items, and we encourage you to contact us, contribute to I'LAN and send us news and photographs from your local Jama'ats as well.

As always, your feedback is appreciated.

Seeker of your prayers,
Habiba Anwar Sadiq
(Editor)

Please email us if you would like to become part of the I'LAN Team. We are in need of volunteers and look forward to hearing from you:

ilan.newsletter@gmail.com

Urgent Request for Prayers

Members of Jama'ats all over the world are requested to remember Brother Izaz Ilahi Malik's family in their prayers during this extremely difficult time for them. Their son Usman Malik, is currently missing and his safe return home is on the minds of all his Ahmadiyya brothers and sisters. He himself is a dedicated and devoted member of the Jama'at.

Anxiously awaiting his return are his parents, wife and two daughters, and siblings.

Shaban-ul-Ahmadiyya's Symposium on the Importance of Prayer

As we reported in the January issue of I'LAN, Shaban-ul-Ahmadiyya is an elected body that was set-up to motivate the youth of our Jama'at.

Every year, new office bearers are elected and they work diligently throughout the year, presenting the problems faced by young members to the Central Anjuman ❖



LASER's Qirat Class and Annual Day Function 2011

LASER is an acronym for Lahore Ahmadiyya School for Education in Religion. This is the Central Anjuman's School for educating *mubalaghin* for the Jama'at.

It was established five years ago, with a curriculum based on the educational requirements and modern day demands on missionaries, and equips students to serve in Pakistan, as well as overseas. Its first graduates have already been posted in Peshawar and Lahore, respectively. The educational curriculum is spread over a three-year study

period that includes theoretical and practical training.

Most of LASER's teachers work on a voluntary basis, though some are paid enumeration for their services.

The School is housed in Darus Salam in a separate building with three classrooms and a staff/Principal office ❖



LASER students, teachers and guests with Hazrat Ameer

LASER's Qirat Class and Annual Day Function 2011



**We welcome readers' comments, suggestions, ideas and contributions!
If you would like to send us photos of your Jama'at's events, please email us at:
ilan.newsletter@gmail.com**

Eid Milad-un-Nabi Jalsa in Karachi

Children from the Karachi Jama'at participating in the jalsa



Brig. Muhammad Saeed and Chaudhry Riaz Present Imran Khan with a Donation from the Centre for Flood Relief Work



Jihad Meeting by Essequibo Jama'at in Guyana

A Jihad Meeting was held by the Essequibo Ahmadiyya Organisation Lahore (EAOL) on Saturday 26 February 2011 at Red Lock, Essequibo Coast, Guyana.

Hosted by Brother Abdul Akbar Persaud and his wife, Sister Fazia Persaud, the function was attended by more than 100 people, and chaired by Sister Waheeda Gafar, Vice-President of the EAOL.

The programme started with a presentation

by Imam Noor Sankar of the Jacklow Jama'at, who recited Chapter 98 of the Holy Qur'an with translation and explanations. Sister Salima Ali then presented a nazam, and Brother Mansoor Baksh recited Chapter 2: Verse 177 and spoke on the meaning of righteousness.

Presentations were also given by Brother Shamsudeen Rahim, Brother Shadaad Baksh, Sister Shamyun Fizool, Sister Bismillah (Secretary of the EAOL) and the children of Brother Wazim Barakat ❖

The Five Daily Prayers

By Maulana Muhammad Ali

Editor's Note: this article has been comprised from extracts from the book The Muslim Prayer Book by the same author.

For a Muslim, his prayer is his spiritual diet, of which he partakes five times a day. Those who think it is too often should remember how many times daily they require food for their bodies.

Is not spiritual development much more essential than physical development? Is not the soul more valuable than the body? If food is needed several times daily to minister the needs of the body, is not spiritual refreshment at the same time badly needed? Or, if the body would be starved if it were fed only on the seventh day, has not the soul been starved by denying to it even the little which it could get after six days?

The founder of Christianity himself emphasized this when he said, "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). What Christ taught in words has been reduced to practical form by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings be upon him.

The right development of human faculties depends upon the purification of man's inner self and the suppression of evil tendencies. "He surely is successful who purifies it" (91:9). Prayer is spoken of as a means of purification for the heart: "Recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book and keep up prayer; surely prayer keeps one away from indecency and

evil" (29:45). It may be noted that while other religions have generally set apart a whole day for Divine service, on which other work is not to be done, Islam has given quite a new meaning to Divine service by introducing prayer into the everyday affairs of men. A day is not here set apart for prayers, and in this sense no Sabbath is known to Islam.



Islam requires that a Muslim should be able to disengage himself from all worldly occupation and resort to his prayers, even when he is most busy. Hence, it is also that Islam

has done away with all institutions of monkery, which require a man to give up all worldly occupations for the whole of his life in order to hold communion with God. It teaches that communion with God may be held even when man is most busy with his worldly occupations, thus making possible that which was generally considered impossible before its advent.

But while Islam has given permanence to the institution of prayer by requiring its observance at stated times and in a particular manner, it has also left ample scope for the individual himself to select what portions of the Holy Qur'an he likes and to make what supplications his soul yearns after. General directions have no doubt been given, and on these the whole of the Muslim world is agreed, for these directions were necessary to secure regularity, method and uniformity; but in addition to these, ample scope has been left for the individual to give vent to his own feelings before the Great Maker of the universe ❖

Download the PDF file of this book for free from
<http://aaiil.org/text/books/mali/muslimprayerbook/muslimprayerbook.pdf>

Book Review:

“Does God Hear Man’s Prayers?”

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed

By Siddiq Sadiq

Compiled and translated by Maulana Aftab ud Din Ahmed, “Does God Hear Man’s Prayers?” is a selection of excerpts from various manifestos, books and sermons. A truly impressive and mesmerizing collection of works by one of the most impressive personalities of all times, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

In the most refined and elegant approach, he teaches his readers the depth, gravity and concentration required in the state of prayer; how not only is it important to “stretch (your soul’s) hand of petition,” but to do so with “utmost enthusiasm.”

Through all his writings, Hazrat Sahib explains that Allah knows that “the petition is meant for none but Himself.” He further clearly distinguishes the prayer offered by a man of spirituality from that of a man in ignorance, specifying that the man of spirituality will fasten his prayer with “knowledge” and “recognition” of Allah.

Towards the end of the collection, there are a little over 50 duas appropriate for almost any prayer—a remarkable collection.

The principal ideas throughout these particular writings of Hazrat Sahib concentrate on the fact that Allah is not only a listening God, but also helping. Understanding how sometimes seekers of prayers and guidance get unsatisfied and discouraged when their prayers are gone unanswered, Hazrat Sahib convinces us otherwise. He repeatedly mentions the verse from the Holy Qur'an, “Call on Me and I will accept your prayer,” convincing us that it is Allah’s promise.

As mere mankind, we are composed of mistakes due to which our desires can be wrong. In addition, Hazrat Sahib also reminds us that Allah’s rejection of the prayers is in fact a kind of acceptance ❖

Books by the same author available for free download:

- ***Does God Hear Man's Prayers***
<http://www.aaiil.org/text/books/mga/doesgodhearprayers/doesgodhearprayerspdf.shtml>
- ***The Teachings of Islam***
<http://aaiil.org/text/books/mga/teachingsislam/teachingsislam.shtml>
- ***A Brief Sketch of My Life***
<http://www.ahmadiyya.org/bookspdf/bar/sklife.htm>
- ***Essence of Islam***
<http://aaiil.org/text/books/mga/essenceislam/essenceislam.shtml>

An Extract from the UK's Daily Mail

Saying a Quick Prayer Can Calm Frayed Nerves and Boost your Mood,

23 March 2011

Do you have trouble keeping hold of your temper and find you lash out at the slightest provocation? The power of prayer could help, according to scientists.

Researchers found people who made a silent appeal were better able to cope with their anger, whether they were religious or not. Co-author Brad Bushman of Ohio State University, said: "People often turn to prayer when they're feeling negative emotions, including anger. We found that prayer really can help people cope with their anger, probably by helping them change how they view the events that angered them and helping them take it less personally."

Professor Bushman said the project was the first to examine the effects of prayer on anger and aggression. In one study, U.S. college students completed a questionnaire that measured their levels of various emotions including anger and depression. They then wrote an essay about an event that made them feel very angry. Afterwards, they were told the essay would be given to a partner, whom they would never meet, for evaluation.

But, in reality, there was no partner and all the participants received the same negative, anger-inducing evaluation that included the statement: "This is one of the worst essays I have ever read!"

After angering the participants, the researchers asked them to read a newspaper story about a student named Maureen with a rare form of cancer. They were asked to imagine how Maureen felt about what happened and how it affected her life. Then, the participants were randomly assigned to either pray for Maureen for five minutes, or to simply think about her.

Afterwards, the researchers again measured the students' levels of emotion. As expected, self-reported levels of anger were higher among the participants after they were provoked. But those who prayed for Maureen reported being significantly less angry than those who simply thought about her.

In a second study the students wrote an essay, but half wrote about a topic that annoyed them and then received anger-inducing feedback. The other half wrote about a neutral subject and received positive feedback. Participants were then asked to either pray or think about their partner for five minutes. Finally, the participants completed a reaction-time task in which they competed with their unseen "partner."

If they won, they could blast their partner with noise through headphones, choosing how long and loud the blast would be. Students who were provoked acted more aggressively than those who were not provoked if they had been asked to think about their partner. However, students who prayed for their partner did not act more aggressively than others, even after they had been provoked.

"The effects we found in these experiments were quite large, which suggests that prayer may really be an effective way to calm anger and aggression," Professor Bushman said. These results would only apply to the typical benevolent prayers that are advocated by most religions, he added. "When people are confronting their own anger, they may want to consider the old advice of praying for one's enemies," said co-author Ryan Bremner of the University of Michigan.

"It may not benefit their enemies, but it may help them deal with the negative emotions" ❖

Concentration in Prayer

By Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed

(Malfoozat, Vol. 7, pp. 38-39)

I find that nowadays, people's formal prayer consists of nothing but a few physical movements. They do not have even as much fervour and pleasure in their formal prayer as they seem to have in the supplications they make with raised hands after the end of the formal prayer. If only they made their supplications in the very course of the formal prayer! In that case, they might have achieved concentration of mind and also enjoyed bliss in prayer.

So, for the time being, I command you not to supplicate at all immediately after the formal prayer. Try to have the desired delight and concentration in the very course of the prescribed formal prayer, by offering all your supplications during the formal prayer itself. I do not mean thereby that it is forbidden to supplicate immediately after the formal prayer, but what I mean is that till the time you find sufficient concentration in the formal prayer, refrain from making supplication immediately after the prayer, so that you may not be deprived of the ecstasy of prayer. Of course, when you have attained the desired

concentration in formal prayer, there is no harm in offering supplications immediately after the formal prayer.

It is better that you offer your supplications in your own language in the very course of the formal prayer. The ardour and fervour that is produced in supplications made in one's own language can never be produced in supplications made in any other language. During formal prayer, in addition to offering the Qur'anic and other prescribed supplications, present your needs before God in the form of supplications in your own tongue, so that you may gradually have bliss and pleasure in your prayer.

The best supplication is to supplicate to win the pleasure of God and to have deliverance from sin, because sin hardens the heart and makes man a worshipper of the world. So, we should make petition to God that He may remove from us the sins that harden our hearts, and that He may show us the path of His pleasure ❖

Selected Hadith on Prayers

Ibn Mas'ud said: I asked the Prophet which action is dearest to God and he replied, "prayer at its proper time." (*Mishkat al-Masàbih*, p.114-115)

Abu Dharr said that the Prophet went out in wintertime when the leaves were falling and took two branches of a tree whose leaves began to fall. He then addressed Abu Dharr and said: "a Muslim observes prayers for God's sake and his sins fall from him as these leaves fall from this tree." (*ibid*, p.116)

Abu Hurairah reported that, He heard the Messenger of Allah say: "Tell me, if there is a stream at the door of one of you, in which he bathes five times every day, what dost thou say, will it leave anything of his dirt? This is the likeness of the five prayers, with which Allah blots out (all) faults." (*A Manual of Hadith*)

Ask an Expert

Readers are encouraged to send in their own questions to put forward to the most knowledgeable members of our jama'at. We will try our best to publish all questions and answers, insha Allah. Please email us at ilan.newsletter@gmail.com.

Question:

If we, as Muslims, are to believe in pre-ordination and that the major events of our lives have already been decided, then what is the point of praying for a particular outcome?

Reply:

The reply to this question has been taken from Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed's book: "Does God Hear Man's Prayers?"

Despite the truth of the theory of pre-ordination, in the laws of nature created by God certain things have been appointed as means to the removal of certain troubles. For instance, water is a natural means to the quenching of thirst and bread to the appeasing of hunger. In the face of such facts, why should one be surprised to be told that prayer is also a means to the fulfilment of our needs—a means in which a power has been reposed by the Mighty Hand of Truth to draw the grace of God?

The experiences of thousands of servants and righteous persons bear testimony to the fact that in prayer, there is really a power of absorption. It is true that everything has been pre-ordained; nevertheless, just as it is pre-ordained that so and so will be taken ill and will recover on using such and such medicine, similarly, it is pre-ordained that if such and such an afflicted person will pray, materials for his deliverance will be provided as a result of his prayer. And experiences show that whenever, by the grace of God, prayer happens to appear with all its

requisites, the object prayed for is sure to materialise. The Qur'anic verse, *Call on Me, I will accept your prayer*, points to this truth. This amounts to saying, "You go on praying to Me, I will accept your prayers in due course."

Another objection raised in this connection is that no pre-ordination can be tentative (avertable) and that no revelational prophecy, which is conditional, can be in consonance with God's policy. However, the mind of man is always so inclined that if he is warned beforehand against some calamity due to befall at an appointed time, he wants to avert it through prayer and charity. This shows that the spiritual law of God has it inscribed on the book of nature and given it as judgement that calamities are avertable through prayers and charity. All those prophecies of warning mentioned in the Qur'an that are scattered over an extensive period of religious history from Prophet Noah to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, are of a conditional nature.

The announcement of these prophecies amounts to saying that such and such a punishment is to overtake you; if, however, you repent and do good deeds, it will be withheld, or else you will be crushed. Ponder over the following verses of the Qur'an:

Surely he who keeps his duty and is patient, Allah never wastes the reward of the doers of good. (12:90).

In other words, whoever will exercise patience and fear God, God will not allow that person's reward to be wasted ❖

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